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ABSTRACT

The Summer Umbrella Program was designed to provide remedial instruction to children with demonstrable needs in reading, mathematics, and English as a second language. Instruction functioned on an individual or small group basis, employing a flexible, eclectic, multi-modality methodology. The instructional design was diagnostic/prescriptive. Pre and posttests of skills achievement and formal evaluative observation by a consultant were employed as evaluative techniques. Observation findings showed that a diagnostic/prescriptive model was implemented according to guidelines. The instructional strengths and expertise that existed among paraprofessionals, teachers, and administrators made for a positive climate. Pupils were observed to be eager to learn, attentive, and responsive to instruction. On the elementary level, 79.5 percent of the students obtained the same or a greater number of instructional objectives identified as the program goals for reading, 80.7 percent for ESL, and 74.6 percent for mathematics. On the junior high level, 81.2 percent obtained the program goals for reading, 80.4 percent for ESL, and 79.8 percent for mathematics. These findings indicate that in general, program guidelines were observed and most program goals were realized. (MK)

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SCHOOL DISTRICT 6

TITLE I SUMMER PROGRAM

EVALUATION REPORT

(5009-01601)

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I- Program Description and Philosophy

School District 6's Summer Umbrella Program was designed to provide supplementary yet comprehensive remedial instruction to public and non-public school children who 1) were held over as of June 1979 2) failed to pass the State's PMCT 3) were recommended by building principals. The program was divided into a Summer Day Elementary School Program (SDES), covering from the first to the sixth grades, and the Summer Junior High School (SJHS), that provided services to children in the seventh, eighth and ninth grades.

Each of these two components consisted of three instructional programs in the areas of Reading, Mathematics, and English-as-a-Second-Language. Children with demonstrable need in any of these three areas received small group and/or individual instruction five times per week. The specific deficiencies of each child were objectively diagnosed and an individualized prescription for instruction was developed.

The Summer Day Elementary School Program consisted of a Reading, Mathematics, and ESL component in each of three elementary schools-P.S. 28, 132, and 189-whose location afforded the greatest geographical coverage within the district's boundaries. The Summer Junior High School was similarly composed of a Reading, Math., and ESL component, in one centrally-situated Junior High School-J.H.S. 143. Site selection was guided by the wish to maximize the geographic/coverage afforded per school, with physical facilities that could effectively, conveniently, and safely house the programs.

The program started July 5th, 1979, operating Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. until 12 noon, August 10, 1979, when the program ended.

II- Program Design:

A.- Instructional Design:

Students for each program were admitted on the basis of a demonstrable need for remedial instruction in reading, math, or ESL, and/or on the principals's recommendation. A diagnosis of each child's skill deficiencies was provided by assessment with a criterion reference test (SRA) that was scheduled for the first week of July. An individual profile was developed for each child, that defined instructional needs in terms of specific skill deficiencies, based on the results of such assessment. This profile, in turn, served as the basis for an individualized prescriptive instructional plan that addressed those skill areas identified as deficient with the proper materials (SRA) and methods.

Instruction functioned on an individual or small group (of 6-10 pupils) basis. Each class consisted of twenty children that were covered by a teacher and an educational assistant. Each child received from 3 to 5 periods of instruction in each content area per week.

Teacher selection was based on expertise in each instructional area in the elementary school and increase in the JHS. This allowed for an eclectic methodology to be used, where each teacher and educational assistant could develop and employ those methods and techniques that suited each child's and each group's needs profile. This flexibility was further extended by a multi-media approach that served to enrich the repertory of learning materials and situation available to each child.

B.- Program Personnel:

As was mentioned previously, staff selection was governed by expertise and experience in each of the instructional areas concerned.

1) Instructional Staff:

One SDES or SJHS teacher was assigned to every program per 20 pupils. In each school, one paraprofessional was assigned to every teacher. Volunteer

Educational Assistants were available in some schools to supplement the staff.

Staff utilization followed a team approach. The SDES & SJHS teachers and educational assistants, in conjunction, administered diagnostic and achievement tests, and provided instruction to pupils on an individual and/or a group basis. Teachers also held conferences with the pupils' parents; and training sessions with the assistants. Record-keeping tasks were shared by both teachers and educational assistants.

Teachers in the SDES & SJHS Reading and Math Programs each covered 20 students per period, for 5 periods of 90 minutes each, or 10 periods of 45 minutes, making for a total of 450 minutes of instruction per week. Instruction took place in groups no larger than 10 students. Students in these programs attended two 45-minute periods per day for a total of ten periods per week, or five periods of 90 minutes each per week (one period daily), for a total of 6 weeks. The projected pupil participation was: for 1st. grade-20 pupils, 2nd. grade-20 pupils, 3rd.-20, 4th.-40, 5th.-40, 6th.-20, and 7th. and 8th. grade-120.

Teachers in the SDES and SJHS ESL program each covered 20 students per period, for 20 45-minute periods every week, for a total of 900 periods of instruction per week. Every elementary school was to cover 180 students, and 50 students were to be admitted to the J.H.S. Each student received from 3 to 5 periods every week, for 6 weeks. This program functioned on a pull-out basis, drawing students from reading and math for daily specified periods.

2) Supervisory Staff:

Every school had a General Assistant, in charge of all the programs in the building; besides the overall coordination of these programs, the General Assistant provided teachers with support in the management and evaluation aspects of their program, and daily supervision of program implementation. Regularly scheduled staff conferences were held under the direction of the General Assistant.

The Reading and ESL programs had a Coordinator, whose responsibilities were the overall coordination of the program in all the buildings, assistance with the management and evaluative aspects of the program, and staff development activities such as training sessions and demonstration lessons.

3. Support Staff:

Each site was provided with a school secretary, who performed those clerical duties associated with payroll, pupil accounting, student records, and administrative notices and memos of general school importance.

Appropiate custodial services were also provided at each site.

III- Evaluation Design:

Since the instructional design of the program was diagnostic/prescriptive, the evaluation aspects of the program were crucial in importance, as they were to form an integral, indispensable part of the instructional process.

A.- Records:

The following records were maintained:

1. Pupil participation lists, containing pre and post test results, diagnostic and prescriptive information, and demographic data, were maintained for every child in the program.

2. Individual progress profiles were maintained with diagnostic/prescriptive information, for each child in the program.

3. Daily logs reflecting the students receiving instruction, the topic of instruction, and pupil responses, were routinely maintained by every teacher in the program.

All pupil records became part of their permanent, cumulative record at the end of the program.

B.- Evaluation Design:

1. Screening:

a) Reading and Math: for the SDES, public and non-public school children from grades one to six living in the area covered by the school district

who were one or more years behind in reading or math as of the NYC testing of March, 1979, were entitled to participate. Those students who were designated holdovers as of June 30, 1979, received preference in assignments; as well as those students whose participation was recommended by school principals.

The SJHS programs followed the same screening criteria, for 7th. and 8th. grade children, except failure of the State's Minimum Competency Test of June, 1979 was also included.

b) ESL: Both the SDES and SJHS programs accepted public and non-public school children in the corresponding grades who obtained a ranking on the English version of the Language Assessment Battery from the 1st. to the 20th. percentile. Principals' recommendations were also accepted.

2. Testing:

a) Reading: SDES and SJHS programs were to employ the SRA probe in reading to diagnose individual pupil skill disabilities as a guide to a prescriptive instructional plan as well as for the posttest. Those children in the reading programs who were also eligible for ESL instruction were not included with this program's assessment.

b) Math: SDES and SJHS programs were to use the SRA Math Probe for diagnosis as well as for the post test. All children in the Math Program, regardless of eligibility for ESL instruction, were included in the testing.

c) ESL: SDES and SJHS programs were to use the SRA Reading Probe on a pre and post test basis.

3. Formal Evaluative Observation:

One consultant was contracted for 18 days to conduct observations for the evaluation of the programs in the schools. The observational criteria were: degree of conformity with program guidelines, particularly with reference to participant and position distribution, instructional design, behavioral

objectives, testing and the evaluation design, and support and supervisory services; other relevant observational criteria; plus other salient facts which emerged during open-ended discussions with the pupils and the staff. The main activities conducted consisted of observations of classes in progress at every site, plus conferences with the teachers, paraprofessionals, pupils, and general assistants. The following instruments were used: a project data form, a classroom observation form, and teacher, para, and general assistant questionnaires.

The District's Director of Research and Evaluation supervised program evaluation.

4. Objectives:

The quantitative behavioral objectives for each of the programs have been summarized in Table I. The table show the percentage of children who must achieve the specified number of objectives (as defined by the SRA-CRITERION REFERENCED TEST.)

TABLE I: PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN WHO ARE TO ACHIEVE THE MINIMUM NUMBER OF SKILL OBJECTIVES THAT EVERY PROGRAM IDENTIFIED FOR EACH LEVEL AS ITS INSTRUCTIONAL GOAL.

	SDES		SJHS	
PROGRAM	% of Children	# of Objectives	% of Children	# of Objectives
READING	90	4	70	4
ESL	75	3	75	3
MATH	70	4	70	4

The skill objectives children had to master in each program correspond with those defined in the SRA instruments of assessment. These skills are developmental, and are the focus of the instructional program as well; this is congruent with the diagnostic-prescriptive systems philosophy of the program.

The number of skills mastered by each child during the course of instruction in the summer program was determined as follows: test results translated into the number of skills the child had mastered and those that were yet-to-be mastered; the number of yet-to-be mastered skills for each child in the pre-test assessment was recorded (and used) as "Objectives for Instruction", the number of skills assessed as mastered in the pre-test for every child was substracted from the number of skills assessed as mastered in the posttest to produce the number of skills each child had mastered during the summer program; this number was to be recorded as "Mastered Objectives."

IV- Program Evaluation:

A. Observation Findings:

Each General Assistant, all 32 teachers, and 24 Educational Assistants were interviewed and/or observed. Each classroom was visited for 45 minutes per session.

The findings that follow do not originate just from observations; these have been supplemented with information collected by the district's evaluation office in conferences with the General Assistants, the program coordinators, and some of the teachers. The findings below will refer to the programs's compliance with its guidelines, and will be structured to parallel the summary of those guidelines in sections II and III above.

1. Program Design:

a) Instructional Design: The diagnostic/prescriptive model was essentially implemented according to guidelines, over the entire summer, in all the schools.

Three difficulities, however, functioned as obstacles to full implementation at the beginning of the program in some of the schools. First, not all test materials were available at some elementary schools; grouping of the pupils had to be done on an ad hoc basis by each teacher until objective test data was available. Second, some resistance to the concept of prescritive instruction was expressed by a number of teachers; in particular, the clerical duties associated with the processing of test data were the target of criticism. Third, there was some initial reluctance in the use of the SRA materials; with increased familiarity and supplies of these kits, however, this reluctance dissipated.

As soon as test data was available to teachers, the grouping of the children was conducted in accord with the guidelines and the philosophy of the program. In general, however, even initial grouping-without test data-was made on the basis of teacher estimates of children's skill levels; these, it was found, largely coincided with the test data assessing the children's skills, so no major re-organization ever had to be carried out in any of the schools. This was reflected by the stable organization of the programs in all the schools, where some groups were formed across grade levels,to conform to actual children's skills needs in the content areas concerned.

A flexible, eclectic, multi-modality methodology was employed. The particular methodological configuration of each class was the result of a process of accomodation between each teacher's repertory of techniques and the particular group's or individual child's profile of needs. Also, as soon as a sufficient amounts of SRA materials was available in each school, and the teachers became familiar with the kits' content and the manner of use, the prescriptive model for instruction was established. Supplementing these, other materials were observed in use, associated with board and chart work, teacher- and master-made rexos, class readers, programmed instruction kits for independent study,

cassettes for listening and attack skills, records for read-alongs, etc.

Thus, as soon as the initial attitudinal and logistical obstacles were negotiated, the programs in all the schools were implemented within the philosopy and the guidelines of the program.

b) Program Personnel: In accord with guidelines, the programs' instructional staff were experienced and resourceful teachers, title-specialists in each content area, with extensive training in its methodology; the paraprofessionals employed were of an equivalent background and calibre. Teacher-para relations were observed to be mutually beneficial and rewarding; tasks were distributed according to the differential strenghts and expertise of each staff memeber, in an atmosphere of cooperation, and based on the realities of the situation.

Program coordinators were district office personnel traincd and well-acquainted with the teaching of each content area, and with the administration of such programs. The General Assistants were assistant principals who, in all except one case, were assigned to the school during the regular school year. In addition, all of the administrative personnel had previous experience with the management of summer programs. Their support of the instructional aspects of the programs was informed with extensive expertise derived from training and experience, with seriousness and a desire to excel, and with enthusiasm.

The instructional strengths and expertise that existed between the paras, the teachers, and the administrators, made for a positive climate in all the schools which facilitated effectiveness of performance. This, it was observed, influenced and was reflected by the motivation of the students. With but a very few exceptions, pupils were observed to be eager to learn, attentive, and responsive to instruction.

Support services were adequate to meet the needs of all the schools but with one exception. Problems arose in the Junior High School with community teenagers gathering about the school and attending the lunch program while school

was in session. Staff who was harassed by incidents with these teenagers requested that competent security guards be included as part of the support staff for the Junior High School.

The teacher/pupil ration guidelines were observed, with 20 students in attendance in each class, as an average, over the entire length of the program. Attendance declined gradually at first, but stablilized quickly; discharges resulted from unexplained absences of five consecutive days or longer, and from students' exceeding Title I remedial levels. Some of these latter students, however, were retained when justifiable pedagogical considerations recommended it.

Classes within the schools were organized by grade or a combination of consecutive grades. Two of the three elementary schools departmentalized the upper grades, as did the Junior High School. A recess period of about ten minutes marked the mid-point of the school day when students changed classes. In some instances recess periods were staggered.

A breakfast and lunch program was held daily in each school; these, for the most part, were not a source of interference with the instructional program.

2. Evaluation Design:

a) Records: Written assessment records such as test grades, diagnostic-prescriptive notations, lesson plans, para logs and work folders were in evidence early in some schools and later in the rest.

Although most of the data appeared for most of the students, the manner of presenting the data varied irregularly across schools, programs, and in some cases, even within classes. Instructions governing the recording of the test data-as it had to be translated into "Objectives" in the pupil participation lists-led to inconsistencies in what actually was recorded. This, however, was rectified by the evaluation team.

Fortunately, since this information did not directly concern instruction or grouping, this ambiguity did not have a negative impact on the substantive aspects of the program.

b) Screening: Guidelines for the admission of students into the program were generally observed; the only exception, mentioned above, concerned the admission of students into the program who exceeded the specified remedial levels for pedagogical reasons.

c) Testing: The delayed delivery of test materials to some elementary schools, previously mentioned, was the only difficulty encountered in the logistical aspects of testing.

d) Observations: The performance of the observational evaluation of the program conformed with the guidelines, and was responsibly, professionally, and expeditously realized.

B.- Assessment of Program Achievement of Instructional Objectives:

The results of the assessment of each program's achievement of its instructional objectives are summarized on Table 2.

PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN OBTAINING THE SAME OR A GREATER NUMBER OF INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES IDENTIFIED AS THE PROGRAM GOAL FOR THE 1979 TITLE I SUMMER PROGRAM IN SCHOOL DISTRICT 6.

PROGRAM	PS 128	PS 132	PS 189	Elementary School total	J.H.S. total 143	Overall total
READING	77.8	79.6	81.2	79.5	87.4	81.2
ESL	97.3	82.1	52.8	80.7	79.5	80.4
MATH	60.9	84.3	77.9	74.6	100	79.8

TABLE 2

None of the schools in the SDES Reading Program obtained 90% of their children mastering 4 objectives. The ESL program in P.S. 189 fell short of the 75% figure that was its objective. And the Math Program at P.S. 28 did not produce the sought-after 70%.

It is necessary, however, for a number of factors to be considered before arriving at any evaluative conclusions.

It appears that an awareness of the meaning of "Objectives Mastered", as the number of content area skills acquired by children in the program during its course of instruction, was not established. This points to a gap in the staff's conceptualization of the programs approach and philosophy.

Pre-testing occurred late in the SDES; the delayed delivery of test materials held up the diagnosis of the children's skill deficiencies, and caused grouping to be conducted on an individual teacher judgement and ad hoc basis. In addition, the length of instruction time available between pre- and post-test was 4 weeks, and not the 6 weeks that has been anticipated. This 30% reduction in instruction time for assessment could conceivably be reflected in an proportionate adjustment of the number of skills (objectives) children in each program were expected to acquire, before any evaluative conclusions are reached about the effectiveness of the SDES programs.

Test results of children in the Math program who also were in the ESL program were considered together with those of children not in the ESL program. Since math instruction occurred in English, and the math test was administered in English, the performance of children not fluent in English may not be comparable to that of children who are. This seems even more plausible when we also consider that most children in the ESL program receive math instruction in Spanish during the regular school year, as they are part of the district's consent decree bilingual program.

Although two children in the reading program may achieve 4 reading objectives, their performance is significantly different if one had an initial need of 8 reading objectives for instruction, and the other only 4. The way in which program objectives were defined does not allow for these differences to become apparent.

Also, the tests for reading and math assessed mastery of a different total number of skills for different grades. An assessed mastery of 4 reading skills out of a possible 8 by a first grade child is not equivalent to the mastery of 4 math skills out of a possible 16 for a fifth grade child. These differences in performance were also obscured by the way in which program objectives were defined.

Fortunately, these difficulities reflect only on the evaluation of program effectiveness; the substantive, instructional areas of the program were largely unaffected by them.

V. Recommendations:

Steps may be taken to correct some of the difficulties mentioned above, in the areas of planning and evaluation in particular.

The following planning and preparatory measures, taken well in advance of program implementation, may prove useful:

1) All testing and instructional materials should be obtained, and distributed, to the participating schools, well in advance of the start of the program.

2) Regular, periodic conferences should be held between the consultant for evaluation and the supervisory staff, in a defined, structured format, that would allow for any necessary corrective action to be taken while the program is in progress. Provisions should be made for the systematic recording of the results of these conferences.

Program objectives should be redefined to allow for differences in performance to be reflected by the measures used to assess their achievement. A flexible measure for product evaluation that would take performance differences into account, should be selected. Also, the specific measure that is selected as the program goal should be based on past results. A realistic, flexible measure of performance that takes past results into account; that reflects differences accurately; and that is understood and accepted by the staff; would do much to correct most of the difficulties that were encountered this year.

Attention should also be paid to the proper use of program guidelines as objectives for process evaluation. The supervisory activities, and the supervisory staff/consultant conferences would provide a proper basis for process evaluation, that would allow corrective action to be taken when it could still be useful. This requires that the results of such activities and conferences by systematically recorded in a structured format.

VI. Conclusions:

Although logistical and design difficulties hampered the full and proper determination of the extent to which program goals were achieved; the results summarized in Table 2, and the reported observations, indicate that, in general, program guidelines were observed and most program goals were realized. The weaknesses that were uncovered appear not to have affected the substantive, instructional elements of the program. A few steps, as those suggested above, can result in the correction of the logistical and design problems that obstructed the evaluation elements, if not the performance, of the program.